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Mrs. Emerson

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Nostalgia

It was with great difficulty that I dragged my luggage behind me. When our plane landed at the International Airport of Lomé, I immediately saw the difference between my motherland and the United States just by the appearance of the airport. There was a significant lack of technology, and the staff was extremely impolite probably because of the low salary they were getting for their work. My grandmother, who traveled with me and my siblings, could not find one of her bags, and we spent a long time trying to find out what happened. That whole situation prevented us from leaving the airport until hours after the time we were supposed to go. That was why I was surprised when I saw a big group of people waiting for us when we finally made it outside. Some women with unfamiliar faces greeted me and asked me if I remember them. I smiled, nodded, and pretended to recall all the events they told me. It was easier than to say to them that I don't remember anyone from back then unless they were family or close friends. Out of nowhere, I felt someone hug me from behind, and I knew right away that it was my mom. I instinctively hugged her back and tightened my arms around her. We pull away from each other, and I could see her lips moving, but all I could think of was how much she changed. She was still as short as me, but she looked younger and stronger than she did before. After a lot of catching up, we decided to go home. My stepdad's mechanic was our driver for the night, so my mom, her

very talkative friend, and I got into a silver standard looking car. The interior of the car was all black with comfortable looking chairs. My mom sat in the passenger seat, and her friend and I were sitting in the back seats. It was nighttime, so I could not make out much of the city as we were heading home. However, I could see through the windows that Lomé was still very animated at this hour of the night.

After an hour or so, we pulled up to a house that I vaguely remember from my childhood. We made our way into the garage, where we saw Winner, my childhood dog who was a lot meaner because of his old age. Naturally, he barked at me because he did not recognize me, but my mom pulled me away from him and directed me to the living room. On our way there, I looked around me, but I could not see a lot of the house because it was too dark and, I was too tired. When we were in the living room, I saw my step-dad sitting on the couch, and I went to greet him. He was still a tall, skinny guy with a short, well-kept beard. The only difference with his appearance was the little spots of gray hairs in his hair and the little wrinkles on his face. I sat next to him as he asked me how things were in America, and we made other small talks. After that, my mom told me to go to my old room to change out of my uncomfortable airport clothes. My room looked the same as five years ago minus some small details. My posters were still on the walls, and my old books on top of the bed. As I was looking around, I started crying because I realized just how much I missed everyone and everything in this city. I was too busy crying to noticed the door opening and hear my mom walk in the room.

“What’s wrong? Why are you crying?” she asks me

“I don’t know; I am just glad to be back,” I tell her while going in for a hug.

“It’s alright, you are here now,” she told me while holding me tightly against her. After

that, I decided to call it a night concluding that this would be the best summer vacation I had in a long time.

The next day, I woke up to the loud crashing of metal cooking pots. I got up from the bed and took a few minutes to adjust to my new room and environment. I walked to the living room where my mom was sitting in a wooden chair at the dinner table. The living room was vast with large rose gold curtains and big fake flower pots in its corners. The lighous dinner table had fried omelets, freshly baked bread, and tea neatly placed on top of it. I greeted my mom and took a seat while staring hungrily at the food in front of me. I was fixing my breakfast plate when Dorcas, my little half-sister, came to stand beside me. She was born when I was still in America, and I did not see or hear much of her until now. She was a short, chubby, three years old with big eyes and chubby cheeks. She extended her hands to me, and I look over to my mom who told me she wanted help to seat on the chair next to me. After she was seated, she turned to me with a wide grin on her face, and I offered her an equally massive smile. I turn back to my mom to see her smiling at us, and I realized that we both were relieved that Dorcas seemed to like me.

My step-dad was at work, and my mom decided to go shopping after we finished eating. I was at home with my little sister and her nanny. I decided to explore the house and familiarize myself with my new temporary home. The house which was all bricks like all house in Lomé had some cracks on the wall because of all the rain it endured. I decided to go to the kitchen at the back of the house, and I noticed that it's the same as before. The pots and cooking utensils were stacked up in the back corner, and the charcoal used for making a fire was at the entrance. I traced my fingers across the engravement of my name I made when I was little on the wall. I left the kitchen and made my way to the staircase on the hidden side of the living room. Five years

ago, there was not an upstairs in the house, so I was curious to find out what was going on up there. I was on the third step when Dorcas came running up to me and begged me with her big puppy eyes to bring her with me. I could not say no, so I took her by her small, chubby hands, and we went upstairs. I opened the metal door, and I saw rooms and open spaces that I could not label. I put a reminder in the back of my brain to ask my mom what they were later. I sat on a brick that was in what looked like a veranda and placed Dorcas on my lap. As she sat on my lap playfully humming a soft melody, I blankly stared from above at little kids playing in the neighborhood. I kept thinking of how I was going to stop myself from crying when it came time for me to go back to America in three weeks. How was I supposed to handle being away from the people and country I love so much? I shake my head to tried to stop the negative thoughts and kept listening to the humming of Dorcas, and the pleasant buzz of the small neighborhood.

Memoir Reflection

I wrote my memoir about my summer vacation in the city I was born Lomé, Togo. In the paper, I told the readers about how happy I felt when I saw my distant family and how I was dreading leaving and going back to the United States. While I am delighted with how my memoir turned out, some areas of it could use some improvement. To start, I could change the vague title “Notalgia” to something that’s more specific and connected to my story. I could change it to something like “Home is where the heart is” to indicate to the readers that the paper they are about to read is about a person going back to their home country. The other thing I could improve is my grammar. That’s the section of my memoir in which I lost the most points. I could get rid of the few run-on sentences and common comma errors that are in the paper. The biggest thing I would change is my verb tense. My memoir switches between present tense and past tense which makes it very confusing for the readers. I would go back and change all the verbs to past tense. I like my memoir, but I feel like now that I know more writing composition, I would go back to make it better.